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MC2 James Norket | October 19, 2021



Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Adm. Samuel Paparo, a graduate of NPS' Systems Analysis program, met with 18 faculty members from various departments and eight industry leaders from seven companies ranging from relatively small startups to long-standing military contractors.

With the constant evolution of Strategic Competition, Navy leaders must explore all avenues to master complex advanced technologies to maintain an advantage over competitors.

Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Adm. Samuel Paparo traveled to the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), Oct. 15, to do exactly that, leveraging the university's expertise and its proximity to Silicon Valley to engage academic and industry leaders on critical operational challenges facing the fleet in the Pacific.

Paparo, a graduate of NPS' Systems Analysis program, met with 18 faculty members from various departments and eight industry leaders from seven companies ranging from relatively small startups to long-standing military contractors. The diversity of this group,

according to NPS President retired Vice Adm. Ann E. Rondeau, is one of the things that makes NPS such a special place.

“This is one of the only places in the country that can host meetings like this,” said Rondeau. “Not only do we possess experienced staff and students, but our geographic location relative to Silicon Valley really enables us to have high-level conversations about problems that the DOD is facing today. NPS’ defense-focused graduate education and applied research solutions meet Navy-specific and national security needs.”

Paparo described to the group his three priorities for advancing the Naval force: building and demonstrating dynamic combat power, strengthening alliances and partnerships, and improving the Navy’s posture in the Pacific.

“We need to make the force as methodical as possible,” Paparo said. “We need to streamline how we plan work, the quality of our work, the efficiency of our workforce, and timeliness of our supplies getting to their final destination.”

A strategic advantage the Navy has is its strong alliances and partnerships. Those relationships make us a more effective force and are our asymmetric advantage, said Paparo.

“And lastly, we want to improve our posture in the Pacific,” he continued. “The future of the Navy is a more mobile force able to be in the right places to execute our objectives.”

What followed was a robust discussion of ideas and options from the diverse pool of subject matter experts. Paparo opened the floor to the group of academics, technologists and business leaders, and many solutions and options were presented. Following this initial effort by Paparo to engage academia and industry, the Pacific Fleet commander noted he knew he had come to the right place.

“NPS is the flagship technical graduate school for the Navy and DOD,” Paparo said. “This school is ruthlessly focused on warfighting, and in the geography that is the hub of technical innovation in the world.”

That combination allows NPS to not only advance the technical leadership of the Naval service, but it also positions the university to act as a catalyst for advancing Paparo’s three priorities for advantage in the Pacific.

“U.S. Pacific Fleet will be the largest consumer of NPS’ intellect, innovation and zeal,” he said.

Following the discussions, Paparo concluded his visit with an exploration of several NPS facilities, including a visit to the additive manufacturing lab to see the Xerox ElemX 3D Liquid Metal Printer first-hand.

“The meeting was a success,” said Rondeau. “I look forward to continuing to support the Pacific Fleet through this great partnership.”